Executive Summary

The following review and validation of the June 17, 2000 Great Basin Long-Range Fire Assessment is being completed at the request of U.S. Forest Service, Region 4. The process entailed the updating of fuel conditions, incorporating the latest climatology, and new long range weather outlooks.

The June 17th report selected the intermediate scenario as having a 60% probability of occurring. This scenario centered on the monsoon developing and spreading into south and eastern Utah during mid to late July and continuing into August. Nevada, Idaho, western Wyoming and western Utah would remain dry with occasional surges of monsoon moisture spilling into this region for brief thunderstorm outbreaks. Dry but weak frontal systems would influence the northern half of the Great Basin. Dry conditions would extend well into the fall for all areas.

Recent weather patterns, current fuel conditions and new long range outlooks reaffirms that the intermediate scenario is still the most likely of the three. The only modification to the intermediate scenario would be to lower the intensity and duration of the monsoon over eastern Utah. Given the current conditions, the intermediate scenario will continue to support a severe fire season through mid October; but not to the extent of the worst case scenario described in the June 17, 2000 assessment. However, the intermediate scenario could produce historical levels of fire activity in some areas.

Important considerations that will continue to directly influence the remainder of the 2000 fire season in the Great Basin Geographical Area are:

* Firefighter and public safety due to extreme fire behavior.

* Fuel loading remains above normal throughout the Great Basin. Energy Release Components and Burning Index Indices continue to be above normal.

* Monsoon moisture re-establishes over eastern Utah during August, resulting in diminished fire intensity.

* Dry conditions should continue over southern/central Idaho, Nevada, western Utah, and western Wyoming with only occasional weak pulses of monsoon moisture for brief periods of increased thunderstorm activity.

Implications of these conditions are:

a. Higher probability of ignitions
b. Higher rates of spread and increased flame lengths
c. High intensity fires
d. Moderate to Long Range Spotting

* Both live and dead fuel moisture are at critically low levels Great Basin wide.

* Long Range Weather Outlooks predict an extended dry fall weather pattern. This would suggest the delay in season ending events.